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KRISHNA RAJA WADIYAR IV

24th Maharaja of Mysore who commissioned KSDL

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FROM THE HOUSE OF MYSORE SANDAL SOAP

KSDL GOES GLOBAL, TO LAUNCH ULTRA-LUXURY SOAP FOR ₹3,000

The soap, to be sold for ₹3,000, is crafted from premium natural sandalwood oil and will be sold exclusively at airports and for export on demand

SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING WITH BUTTER PAPER

Karnataka Soaps and Detergents Limited (KSDL), which manufactures the iconic Mysore Sandal Soap, is going to brand the soap under its exquisite collection, '*Kala Loka* - Treasure of Karnataka' and has designed an exclusive package. KSDL will replace its plastic packaging material with 'butter paper'and use only electric vehicles on its premises | **P4**

MORE PRODUCTS TO LURE GLOBAL BUYERS

- Dr Prashanth PKM, KSDL's managing director, said the luxury soap is part of the company's international expansion strategy. A new manufacturing plant will be set up in Vijayapura
- KSDL revamps Mysore Sandal Soap packaging, signs Tamannaah Bhatia as ambassador, and plans to produce perfumes and cosmetics

331

DEALERS HAVE BEEN ONBOARDED TO ESTABLISH OUTLETS NATIONWIDE

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

288 AYES / 232 NOES

- NON-MUSLIMS IN WAQF COUNCIL AND BOARDS ONLY FOR ADMINISTRATION WORK, WON'T RUN RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS
- 2013 AMENDMENT DURING UPA RULE TO GIVE 123 PROPERTIES IN DELHI TO WAQF IN 25 DAYS NECESSITATED CHANGE: SHAH

WAQF BILL SAILS IN LOK SABHA

Application of Limitation Act

The bill seeks to repeal Section 107 of the 1995 Act, which had rendered the Limitation Act, 1963, inapplicable to waqf properties. The Limitation Act imposes a ban on legal proceedings after a prescribed period. Section 107 has exempted waqf boards from the 12-year limitation period for reclaiming encroached properties

Appointment of non-Muslims

Amendment to Waqf Act proposes the inclusion of non-Muslims to the Central Waqf Council, State Waqf Boards, and waqf tribunal. It allows the govt to nominate three MPs — two from LS and one from RS — to the Central Waqf Council without mandating that they be Muslims. It also allows the appointment of a non-Muslim CEO and mandates that state govts appoint at least two non-Muslim members to Waqf Boards

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

THE Lok Sabha on Thursday passed the contentious Waqf Bill (Amendment) 2024 with a slender majority of 288 against 232 votes.

While the NDA led by BJP secured 288 votes, the Opposition got 232 while one member abstained from voting. The voting was necessitated after the Opposition members sought division of votes in the passage of the bill. In all, 520 members were present in the House during the voting. The debate that began at 12 noon on Wednesday concluded at 12.15 am. It was followed by voting.

Though the NDA has 293 MPs in the Lok Sabha, it secured only 288 during voting.

The BJP was bolstered by a show of support from its key allies like the TDP, JD(U), Shiv Sena and Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), while the INDIA bloc put up a united show in opposing the bill. The debate on the bill reflected the sharp divide between the government and the Opposition. While the BJP has 240 MPs, JD(U) has 12 and TDP 16. Both NDA and Opposition parties had issued whips to their members to be present in Parliament for next three days.

Concluding the debate, Union Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju dismissed the Opposition's allegations that the bill is unconstitutional and minorities are not safe in the country. While tabling the bill for passage, Rijiju said the government had no intention of interfering in the religious matters of Muslims and was solely driven by the aim of transparent administration of Waqf properties. The bill seeks to improve the administration of Waqf properties, introduce technology-driven management, address complexities and ensure transparency, he said.

Earlier, Union Home Minister Amit Shah lashed out at the Opposition and asserted that vote bank is being created by intimidating minorities and confusion is being spread in the country in the name of the Waqf bill. The non-Muslims in Waqf Council and boards are meant purely for ensuring administration of properties in accordance with the stated aims, he said.

"The government does not want to interfere in the religious activities of Muslim brothers and the trusts associated with their donations, i.e. Waqf. Mutawali, Waqif, Waqf will all be Muslims, but it will definitely have to be seen whether the property of Waqf is being maintained properly or not," he said. Taking aim at the Congress, Shah said if there had not been an amendment in the Waqf Act in 2013, there would have been no need to bring this legislation.

Earlier, initiating the debate, Congress Deputy Leader Gaurav Gogoi alleged that the bill was an attempt to attack the basic structure of the Constitution, defame minorities, disenfranchise them and divide the society. He also raised concerns over a controversial provision in the bill that states only a Muslim who has been practicing the faith for at least five years can make donations.

The House also saw a major showdown between the Opposition and treasury benches after AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi tore a copy of the bill in protest. He accused the government of targeting the country's largest minority, calling the proposed amendments an attack on their right.

"This bill is an attack on Muslims. The Modi government has started a war on my freedom. My mosques, my dargahs, my madrasas are on target. This government is not revealing the truth. This bill violates Article 14 — equal protection. Limitations will be imposed. By doing so, the encroacher will become the owner," he said. **P9**

Union Home Minister Amit Shah makes an intervention in the debate on the controversial Waqf (Amendment) Bill in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday | PTI

Minorities in India are safe because the majority in India is fully secular

- Kiren Rijiju, BJP

Consider providing flexibility to states to decide composition of Waqf boards

- KP Tenneti, TDP

BJP wants the Muslims to feel that their rights are being attacked

- Akhilesh Yadav, SP

It is against minority rights, religious freedom and is unconstitutional

- A Raja, DMK

It's an attempt to attack the basic structure of the Constitution

- Gaurav Gogoi, Cong

ED probe in MUDA case can't be stalled, says Karnataka HC

YATHIRAJU @ Bengaluru

IN a major order related to a case of alleged irregularities in allotment of sites by MUDA, the High Court of Karnataka on Wednesday permitted the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) to proceed with its investigation in relation to other persons, whether to be investigated in the capacity of the accused or otherwise, except former MUDA commissioner DB Natesha, under whose tenure 14 sites were allotted to Parvathy, wife of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

A division bench of Chief Justice NV Anjaria and Justice KV Aravind passed the order while disposing of an interlocutory stay application filed by ED to the appeal filed by it challenging the quashing of proceedings against Natesha by a single judge on January 27.

The bench said the court cannot permit a judgment, which could be viewed only as, and which is indeed an interparte, has the effect of stalling all the investigation process in general, as if it is a verdict in rem. Even otherwise, it is well-settled law that the process of investigation by investigating agencies cannot be interjected and it has to be permitted to proceed. Allowing the process of investigation of any crime, whether under the PML Act or offences under any other law, is part of the rule of law. The investigation or inquiry into any alleged criminal activity or offence has to be permitted by the court uninterrupted in accordance with law.

There is no valid reason not to permit ED to continue with its investigation in relation to other persons, whether to be investigated in the capacity of the accused or otherwise, the court said. **P4**

CPM

Party calls for united fight against BJP, RSS

The CPM's 24th Party Congress in Madurai, Tamil Nadu, began with a call for a united, multi-faceted fight against the BJP-RSS combine to oppose its neo-fascist characteristics | **P5**

AP cricket body nudges SRH to shift base to Vizag

B S N MALLESWARA RAO @ Vijayawada

THE Andhra Cricket Association (ACA) has formally extended an invitation to Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) to consider Visakhapatnam as their new home ground.

ACA's offer comes amid the dispute between SRH and the Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA) over complimentary tickets. SRH has accused the HCA management of harassing them for free tickets, and has threatened to move out of Hyderabad. Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has ordered a vigilance probe.

Sources said the ACA has offered to host the remainder of SRH's matches in Vizag. The cricket body has also proposed to host the team mid-tournament and give tax incentives.

Sources said the ACA reached out to SRH brass led by Kavya Maran, offering support if they decide to leave Hyderabad. The Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Uppal is SRH's current home ground.

The ACA-VDCA International Cricket Stadium in Visakhapatnam serves as the secondary home ground for Delhi Capitals, owned by the GMR Group. This season, Vizag hosted two IPL matches—DC vs LSG and DC vs SRH—which drew sizable crowds. Recently, ACA renovated the Vizag stadium, enhancing basic amenities and luxury facilities.

"Since the Uppal stadium has a seating capacity of 39,000, compared to Vizag stadium's 28,000, IPL franchises may incur loss of around ₹3 crore per match. To mitigate this, we've offered a SGST tax benefit of up to ₹1 crore per match at Vizag," said an ACA official.

Vizag is set to host the third One-Day International match between India and South Africa on December 6, 2025. Sources said the city may also host the inaugural match of Women's Cricket World Cup 2025.

Six-week HC deadline to stop bike taxis

YATHIRAJU @ Bengaluru

THE High Court of Karnataka has granted six weeks to Ola, Uber, and Rapido to cease all operations as aggregators of bike taxis from Wednesday. The state government has to ensure that all bike taxi operations are stopped after six weeks.

Justice BM Shyam Prasad pronounced the order on Wednesday, disposing of a batch of petitions filed by Uber India Systems Pvt Ltd, ANI Technologies Pvt Ltd and others in 2022, seeking the court's direction to the state government to consider their applications submitted in 2022 to register motorcycles as transport vehicles.

The court said unless the government notified guidelines under Section 93 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, and Rules there under, the petitioners cannot operate as aggregators offering bike taxi services and the Transport Department cannot be issued a directive to register motorcycles as transport vehicles.

The court posed two questions to government. Firstly, whether the court can hold that the law, as it exists, does not permit bikes (internal combustion engines) to be run as taxis, and secondly, if the answer to this question is in the negative (the law does not prohibit these bikes from operating as taxis), then what directions must be issued to the government in this case.

Min wages in K'taka to be revised, may top country

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

KARNATAKA may become the top state in the country to have the highest minimum wages for skilled and unskilled labourers. A wage revision notification is expected to be issued in two weeks.

There are 82 types of scheduled jobs for which minimum wages have been fixed. Labourers come under unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled and highly-skilled categories and minimum wages are fixed as per their categories. As per the 2022 notification issued by the Labour Department, minimum wages vary from Rs 12,000 to Rs 20,000 per month. In Karnataka, there are close to 1.7 crore workers in various sectors, including organised and unorganised.

Official sources told *TNIE* that the draft notification on wage revision will be placed before the Karnataka Minimum Wage Advisory Board, which will recommend wages for various categories.

The state government may accept these recommendations or modify them.

Trade unions have been demanding that the minimum wages be increased up to Rs 35,000 per month.

Labour Minister Santosh Lad said minimum wages have not been finalised yet. The proposal has to be kept before the board for approval, he said. **P5**

Mockery of 10th Schedule: SC on Revanth's defection remark

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Wednesday slammed Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy for stating that no by-elections would be held if BRS MLAs switch to the Congress.

A two-judge bench led by justices B R Gavai and Augustine George Masih criticised Reddy for "making mockery of the 10th Schedule" — which deals with provisions on disqualification due to defection — with his statement on the floor of the state assembly.

The court's reaction came during a hearing on a plea filed by BRS leaders K T Rama Rao and Padi Kaushik Reddy, seeking timely action by the Speaker on disqualification proceedings against 10 MLAs who defected to the Congress.

A Revanth Reddy

Reddy had made the statement on March 27, sparking controversy. The court observed that statements made by politicians in the Assembly have sanctity and can be used to interpret laws.

It noted that something said in a public gathering, like the Ramlila Maidan in Delhi, would be different from statements made on the floor of the legislative assembly, which carry more weight.

The court reminded Reddy of his previous statement on granting bail to BRS leader K Kavitha and Manish Sisodia was out of line.

Appearing for the Speaker, senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi said the assembly proceedings were not in question in the matter pending before the SC.

The bench told Rohatgi to convey to the CM that there should be no "repeat action" and that the court is "not powerless" in issuing contempt notices. When Rohatgi said he was not appearing for the CM, the bench said he had appeared for him once in that case.

RARE HONOUR

Israel screens The Diplomat to welcome Indian envoy

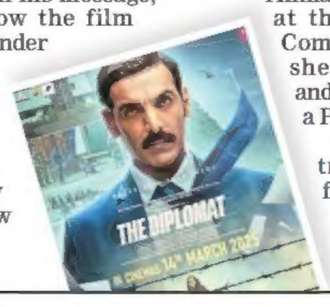
JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

IN probably the rarest of rare ushering in of an ambassador by a host country, Israel's foreign ministry hosted the world premiere of the movie *The Diplomat* on Tuesday to welcome India's new envoy, J P Singh.

The movie, starring John Abraham, is based on a real-life crisis involving Singh.

Before the screening, Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa'ar met Singh and wished him success in his new stint.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, in his message, highlighted how the film serves as a reminder that diplomacy requires thinking beyond standard procedures, with each day presenting new challenges.



Singh, a 2002 batch IFS officer, was posted in Pakistan when an Indian woman named Uzma Ahmad sought refuge at the Indian High Commission, saying she was abducted and forced to marry a Pakistani man.

The film portrays how Singh faces a complex web of diplomacy, Pakistani law, and pressures to secure Uzma's return to India.

Speaking at the film's gala reception, Singh shared two key lessons from his experience: the importance of teamwork and the support of political leadership. Sushma Swaraj was the foreign minister then.

Singh also recalled Prime Minister Narendra Modi's clear directions during crisis meetings to ensure the safety of every Indian citizen.

EXPRESS EXCLUSIVE

Assisted Ranya to dispose of 49.6kg gold, accused Jain tells DRI

DRI probe revealed that Sahil Sakaria Jain, accused No. 3 in gold smuggling case, had assisted and abetted actress Ranya Rao, accused No. 1, in disposing of 49.6kg of gold, worth ₹40.13 crore. DRI stated before the Special Court for Economic Offences that Jain had accepted that he had assisted Ranya in transferring ₹38.39cr of hawala money to Dubai, and transferred hawala money of ₹1.73cr to Ranya in Bengaluru **FULL STORY ON P3**